

# Parent Pledge

## Pace Car Programme

Here is another example of a pledge programme used for drivers in the wider school community.

“The Pace Car program helps stop speeding on neighbourhood streets. It’s simple – drivers in your community sign the Pace Car pledge, and then proudly display the official Pace Car emblems on their cars. By agreeing to drive within the speed limit, cars become “mobile speed bumps,” slowing the traffic behind them. Drivers also agree to be more aware of and courteous to other road users, especially pedestrians and cyclists. Many Pace Cars can effectively calm traffic throughout your neighbourhood. The more people who join, the better it works! The Pace Car program was invented by David Engwicht of Creative Communities International, Queensland, Australia.”

<http://saferoutesns.ca/programs/pace-car>

Download the *Parent Pledge* card template at

[www.movinmarch.com/toolkit](http://www.movinmarch.com/toolkit)

## How to set up a Parent Pledge system

A *Parent Pledge* system is where parents agree to model safe behaviour near the school by signing a *Parent Pledge* card. Here’s how you can set up a *Parent Pledge*:

Discuss what your main issues are. Is it speed? U Turns? Parking? Parents not using crossings? You might want to spend some time observing driver behaviour.

Create pledge cards – you or your students can develop your own pledge cards or download a template from:

[www.movinmarch.com/toolkit](http://www.movinmarch.com/toolkit)

Your pledge cards will include your main issues. Some examples include:

I promise to:

- Slow down near the school
- Allow my children to walk or wheel to school
- Use alternative drop-off points
- Drop my children further away from school so they can walk part of the way
- Be a good role model and use pedestrian crossings
- Not park on yellow lines or over driveways

## Communication

Include a notice in your newsletter about the *Parent Pledge* scheme or send a letter home with the *Parent Pledge*.

Download a template at:

[www.movinmarch.com/toolkit](http://www.movinmarch.com/toolkit)

Congratulate parents who sign the pledge and exhibit good driver behaviour:

- Publish their name in the newsletter
- Give out small prizes or certificates

**Parent Pledge**

**I PROMISE TO:**

- Allow my children to walk or wheel when possible
- Use alternative drop-off points
- Slow down when driving near the school
- Not park on yellow-lines or over driveways
- Not do u-turns near the school

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Parent Pledge - Inspiration

## Traffic Tamers

You might like to use a combination of a walk to school and parent pledge initiatives.

David Engwict, the inventor of the Walking School Bus has developed a holistic walk to school programme called *Traffic Tamers*.

The programme combines a walking to school promotion and the Parent Pledge in a fun and imaginative way. Children are taught the three magic ways to 'tame *dragon wagons*' (cars). They get a magic star each time they help tame *dragon wagons*.

1. The first and easiest way to tame *dragon wagons* is let them rest in the garage and walk to school. Each morning the teacher or students count how many magic stars they have earned by walking, and mark them off on a chart.
2. Students can earn bonus magic stars by getting adults to sign a Tamed Dragon Wagon Pledge. The Pledge states that the adult agrees to drive within the speed limit and help make streets safer for kids.
3. Students can also earn bonus magic stars by sponsoring another class or schools in becoming part of the Traffic Taming programme. The more kids playing, the safer streets become.

When the class reaches a predetermined number of stars they get a reward that does not cost money: for example, a double length lunch, homework free night, a walk to town, etc.

## Angela's Story

Angela Baker-Price was the first teacher to implement *Traffic Tamers* in Baesweiler, Germany. Angela has seen some fantastic results at the school and in the wider community with 80-90% of the 400 students walking every day.

*"As a teacher at the same school for over 25 years, she had witnessed a slow erosion of children's ability to explore their neighbourhood and city in ever widening circles as they matured. She believed that this shrinking of home territory had serious consequences for the psychological well-being of children. She believed passionately that their identity was tied to the sense of independence and mastery that comes from the freedom to explore the entire city– the ability to face challenges and overcome those challenges. She also believed that children's sense of identity was tied to establishing an intimate relationship with the place where they live and the people that inhabited that place. Children being driven everywhere fractures this important relationship."*